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Identical letters dated 25 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the position of the Syrian Arab Republic on the seventeenth report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2011/715) (see annex).

I would highly appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council before the date of the discussion of that report by the Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 25 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Upon instructions from my Government, I would like to state the position of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on the seventeenth periodic report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon. Syria further reaffirms its commitment to providing all possible support and assistance to consolidate the authority and sovereignty of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory.

- As regards paragraphs 6, 43, 44 and 77, it is unacceptable to continue dragging the name of Syria or the internal situation in Syria into the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), which was adopted with regard to Israeli aggression against Lebanon, because that falls outside the mandate of the Secretary-General's representative. The incidents and figures mentioned in these paragraphs concerning the influx of Syrians into Lebanon or the opening of cross-border fire and Syrian military involvement inside Lebanese territory are incorrect. What the Secretary-General's representative stated has been proven to be incorrect, as pointed out by numerous official Lebanese bodies, because no Syrian soldier has entered Lebanese territory. The majority of those who fled to Lebanon as a result of the actions of armed terrorist groups returned of their own volition after the restoration of security in the border area. Most of the information about Syria contained in the report has been taken from misleading media sources which publish, for the most part, fabrications directed against Syria. The presentation of false reports to the Security Council about Syria in a report on Lebanon is a contravention of resolution 1701 (2006) and members of the Security Council should hold to account whoever seeks to mislead them. The attempt to drag Syria's name into the internal Lebanese situation is part of the campaign against Syria.

- As regards the contents of paragraphs 39 and 42, on the arms embargo and border control, the Secretary-General's representative, although claiming omniscience, is ignorant of the fact that the arms, as everyone knows, are being smuggled from Lebanon into Syria by particular groups in Lebanon involved in attempts to destabilize Syria by supplying armed terrorist groups in Syria with weapons and funds. The Lebanese and Syrian authorities have intercepted many of these smuggling operations and statements have been made officially and in the media in both Lebanon and Syria; there are several individuals currently before the Lebanese courts.

- Syria reiterates its non-acceptance of the references in paragraphs 45, 48, 49, 50, 72 and 73 of the report to the drawing of the border between Syria and Lebanon, as this issue is a bilateral matter between the two countries. Syria stresses once more that the real obstacle to drawing in full the Syrian-Lebanese

border is the continued Israeli aggression and occupation of the Syrian Golan and the Shebaa Farms. Accordingly, the drawing of the border in this area is, in the light of the occupation, an impossibility. The international community must exert the required effort to compel Israel to withdraw from the occupied Lebanese and Syrian territories pursuant to the resolutions of international legitimacy, especially Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of land for peace, in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

- We affirm once more that the statement in paragraph 72 about the drawing of the border being critical for the positive relationship between the two countries is unacceptable. The relationship which currently exists between the two countries is positive and casting doubt on it is interference in the internal affairs of the two countries.

- The main party violating resolution 1701 (2006) is Israel. Whoever claims to want Lebanon's stability and territorial integrity must also want its security and independence. Consequently, it is essential to put real pressure on Israel to withdraw from the remaining occupied Lebanese territory and take deterrent measures to prevent and put an end to Israeli violations.

- As regards what paragraphs 35 and 70 have to say about "armed Palestinian groups", the Palestinian presence in Lebanon is regulated by Lebanese-Palestinian agreements, which have no connection with Syria. Regarding the report's reference to Palestinian positions straddling the Syrian-Lebanese border, we affirm once again that all these positions lie inside Lebanese territory. Consequently, this is not a matter for Syria to involve itself with. The principal reason for the Palestinian presence in Lebanon and neighbouring States, including Syria, is Israel's continued occupation of Palestinian territory and its refusal to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy, especially Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which guarantee the refugees' right of return to the lands from which they were expelled.

- The compilers of the report must undertake to respect the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon and not interfere in its internal affairs under any pretext. Furthermore, they must not continue to turn a blind eye to the fact that the essential element for the security and stability of Lebanon is deterring Israel from its ongoing violations and ending its occupation of Lebanese territory.

- We affirm once more that the international community, if it wishes to play a positive role on the Lebanese scene, must strive as a matter of urgency to end the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory. This will, of itself, bolster the security and stability of Lebanon and have a positive impact on Syria and the entire region.

- Finally, Syria affirms once more its support for the stability and security of Lebanon, for Lebanon's efforts to liberate the part of its territory which is occupied by Israel and for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon.